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## BOOK REVIEWS

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*The Dean of Women.* By LOIS KIMBALL MATHEWS, PH.D. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. Pp. vii+275. \$1.50 net.

This study deals with a subject which is of much more general interest than its title would suggest. The results to be secured from the college course is a subject which should be considered equally by parents and students, educators and administrators, and it is the suggestive treatment of this topic which makes Mrs. Mathews' book valuable to a vastly larger constituency than that to which it nominally appeals. "The ideal college woman would be a splendid product, cultivated and disciplined in mind, superb in physique, gracious and courteous in manner, unselfish, honest, self-controlled, and tolerant. These are all part of one's conception of what college graduates should be" (p. 226). The means for securing these results in the complex organization of the modern American university seem to be, according to Mrs. Mathews' views, chiefly in the hands of the dean of women and a group of women under her direction. "It is the ultimate aim of every dean of women to make as far as possible this dream come true. To that end she in reality is doing all her work. Her problems of living conditions, of student employment, of vocational guidance, of student discipline, of the social life, of the intellectual life—all these are but different aspects of the same fundamental purpose, to develop the finest and highest type of college woman" (p. 226).

Mrs. Mathews' description of the extraordinary equipment necessary to fulfil the duties of a dean of women is followed by the statement that "it is evident that no woman is fitted, by these standards, to be a dean of women" (p. 218). She is right in asserting that "any ideal which is worth conserving is always far beyond human attainment," and her glorification of the office will undoubtedly serve, not only to arouse in those women who hold it a truer valuation of their function, but to convey to the minds of university trustees and presidents that the office is not that of an upper housekeeper or even a "glorified chaperon."

The detailed analysis and description of the problems which confront the dean of women is based upon the conditions and methods found at the University of Wisconsin. The reader who surmises that the material was gathered and put in shape as one result of the "Wisconsin Survey" would record one white mark to the credit of that ill-advised undertaking.

It should be borne in mind, however, by all readers, by those interested in education in general as well as by those seeking information in regard to this special office, that Mrs. Mathews clearly does not intend the Wisconsin method to be followed mechanically or without adaptations to special conditions. In the presentation of different topics she places "The Intellectual Life of Students" as the seventh and last in order, although, to be sure, she never minimizes

its importance as she dwells on "The Problem of Living Conditions and Their Relation to Social Conditions," "The Problem of Student Employment," "Vocational Guidance," "Self-Government Associations," "The Social Life of Students," and "Problems of Student Discipline." The reader is tempted to ask whether if the intellectual life were put first some of the problems which seem of primary importance would not become secondary or even disappear entirely. If the intellectual life were taken as the cornerstone which must be laid in such a way as to serve for the structure which education is called upon by modern life to erect, one suspects that the dean of women would not have "to compromise with and conform to the wishes and requirements of a whole group of men deans" (p. 23), nor would the situation even arise when "a fractious student may appeal from her decision to a dozen other authorities besides the president and the faculty" (p. 23) or "her decisions be more apt to be appealed from and her authority overruled than would be the case with her confrère in a women's college" (p. 23). It is such possibilities as these which evidently exist at the University of Wisconsin which suggest that those interested in defining the position of dean of women as an administrative and academic office should see to it that the dean of women should not be an autocratic officer but rather the executive officer of faculties or boards appointed to carry out general principles determined upon by them as a part of the educational policy of the institution.

Mrs. Mathews has made a genuinely important contribution both directly and indirectly to the education of young men and young women.

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MARION TALBOT

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*Principles of Composition.* By PERCY H. BOYNTON, Associate Professor of English, the University of Chicago. Boston: Ginn & Co. Pp. xix+386. \$1.00.

Mr. Boynton has evidently consulted many textbooks on English composition before writing the one before us. The general plan of the *Principles of Composition* is wholly orthodox—material, the whole composition, the paragraph, the sentence, diction, in the first half; the forms of discourse in the second half. He has treated his material, moreover, in an orthodox way, if by that phrase we mean in conformity to widely accepted ideas. The terms he uses are customary, the explanations he offers in line with the judgment of good teachers everywhere, the employment of exercises to illustrate and enforce his precepts is regular and undisturbing to the conceptions of the most rigid instructor.

But however wide has been his consultation, it is doubtful whether anywhere Mr. Boynton has found a better textbook of its kind. For so far as in plan and scheme he has been merely orthodox, he has been wise; and so far as in method and form he has been original, he has been constantly illuminating. In the chapter on "What to Write About," for instance, he distinguishes between the *presentation* of fact and the *interpretation* of fact, and every